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the Forum, to their ministerial counterparts. Secretary Powell may just deliver some of those invitations in person when he travels to the continent later on this year. The United States will also invite representatives of African regional organizations to this Forum. I hope I get to attend, as well.

Sub-Saharan Africa has suffered much from political oppression and inward-looking economic policies. Africans, themselves, now agree that democracy and open trade are the right way forward. The United States wants to engage sub-Saharan African countries as valued economic partners. And we look forward to welcoming sub-Saharan African leaders as our guests next fall.

Thank you all for coming. And it's now my honor to bring to the podium Phil Crane, Congressman from Illinois.

[At this point, Representatives Philip M. Crane and Charles B. Rangel and Sen-

egalese Ambassador to the United States Mamadou Seck each made brief remarks.]

The President. Again, I want to thank you all for coming. It is our honor to host many from the diplomatic corps. Welcome to the White House. We look forward to working with you. It's in our best interest that your great continent thrive, and we look forward to working with you to make sure it does so.

God bless. Thank you guys for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to professional basketball player Hakeem Olajuwon. The U.S.–Sub-Saharan Africa Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum was established by Section 105 of Title I of the Trade and Development Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–200).

Remarks on Receiving the Report of the National Energy Policy Development Group and an Exchange With Reporters May 16, 2001

The President. Thank you all for coming. Today the Vice President and the National Energy Policy Development Group made their presentation to me and the Cabinet. This is an extensive report. It provides over 100 proposals to diversify and increase the supply of energy, innovative proposals to encourage conservation, and ways to make sure that we get energy from producer to consumer.

I am really pleased with the work the Vice President and his folks did. This is a very optimistic look at America. It's tough, in that it lays out the problems; it's a direct assessment of neglect. But this great Nation of ours, because of our technology, our attitude, our adherence to free enterprise, our willingness to conserve, we're going to solve this problem. And I'm

looking forward to making my case to the American people tomorrow and throughout the years.

While there are some—you know, we can't overcome the fact that we haven't built a refinery in years and we should have. We can make sure—we can make sure that any entity will not illegally overcharge. And so I'm calling on the FTC to make sure that nobody in America gets illegally overcharged. And we're going to make sure FERC will monitor electricity suppliers to make sure that they charge rates that are fair and reasonable. The Attorney General and I will work with the FTC.

But I'm upbeat about America, I truly am. I think this is a country that is going

to show the rest of the world how to deal wisely with energy.

Q. Mr. President, let me make it clearer. Are you calling on an FTC and FERC investigation, or are you plainly restating their obligations under the law already?

The President. I am calling on the FTC to take appropriate action anytime there is a complaint against illegal pricing.

Q. Is there any evidence, to your mind, that there is illegal pricing now? Is there a reason for an investigation?

The President. None whatsoever. But should somebody have a complaint, it is the appropriate role of the FTC to look into that complaint.

Q. And you feel the same on FERC, sir? None whatsoever?

The President. Yes, sir, I do.

Q. Thank you.

The President. Well, actually I say that—FERC has made an analysis and has actually rebated money back to people in the State of California; they have already acted on the notion of reasonable pricing. And we expect FERC to continue to do that, to be vigilant on behalf of the American consumer.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Q. Sir, what can you say to Californians suffering through rolling blackouts? How does your plan help them in the short term?

The President. My plan helps people in the short term and long term by recognizing the problem and by expediting energy development. And what we have done in the State of California is, we've worked very closely with the Governor, to help the Governor permit plants necessary to increase the supply of energy in that big State.

Administrator Whitman and myself and Secretary Abraham heard the call of Governor Davis. He said, "Help us build plants in the State of California," and we did. And we expedited the construction of plants. And so the quicker supply gets on, the easier it's going to be for the consumers

in the State of California. And we will continue to listen and work with the Governor of California. We're deeply concerned about the State of California, as we are with the rest of the Nation.

But we haven't had an energy policy. Interestingly enough, this is the first comprehensive energy policy probably ever—certainly in a long time. And I appreciate so very much the hard work. I've told the people of America, if given the chance to be the President, we would address this problem, and we would address it in a comprehensive way.

As I say, there are over 100 recommendations—over 100 proposals. And we're going to get after it. This isn't just a report that's going to gather dust; this is an action plan, because this is an action administration.

Q. Mr. President, how will your plan lead to lower prices at the gas pump now?

The President. Pardon me?

Q. How will it lead to lower prices at the gas pump now?

The President. Because we recognize that we need more supply. And when you read the report, you'll see that we've laid out constructive ways to make sure that there are more supply available.

I will tell you, there are some who advocate price controls. Price controls do not increase supply, nor do they affect demand. And this is an administration that will take a hard look at the problems. And we'll deal straightforward with the American people, with a plan that is optimistic—it is very hopeful. And it's the right thing to do. And I can't wait for the American people to hear the proposals.

It talks about the ingenuity of America. Ours is a great nation. Ours is a nation that can lead the world in innovative conservation measures, and we provide incentives to do that. Ours is a nation that can explore in technologically friendly ways, and we will show the world how to do so.

But we also have got to recognize our infrastructure is old and stale, and so we've

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got innovative approaches to be able to move product from one part of the country to another, or natural gas, for example, from outside our borders to inside our borders. And so I look forward to good—folks taking a good look at this, because it makes eminent sense for the future of the country.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:50 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House following a Cabinet meeting. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Gray Davis of California. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Announcing the Energy Plan in St. Paul, Minnesota *May 17, 2001*

Thank you. Please be seated. Thank you for that warm welcome. First, I want to thank my friend Norm Coleman. What a great leader he is for St. Paul. He's a very good friend. I think it's important for you all to know that when Norm calls over there to Washington, I'll answer the phone.

Traveling with me today are two of my Cabinet officers: first, from the State of Michigan, the Energy Secretary, Spence Abraham; and the EPA Administrator, Christie Todd Whitman. I appreciate John's invitation to be here, and I want to thank the Capital City Partnership for giving me the chance to come and deliver a major policy address to the Nation.

I'm also pleased to be in the home of the mighty Minnesota Twins. Their cost per win is astounding. [*Laughter*] It serves as a good example of what frugality can do for the Nation. [*Laughter*]

But I'm not here to talk about baseball. The Twin Cities are a great place to discuss America's energy challenge. Minneapolis-St. Paul grew up as a mighty milling and transportation center because of the power of the Mississippi River. Your history was built on energy that was abundant and affordable and reliable. So, too, will be this Nation's energy future. I invite you to think with me about that future.

I had an early look at the future this morning, right here in St. Paul. I toured a plant that harnesses the best of new tech-

nology to produce energy that is cleaner and more efficient and more affordable. The plant boils enough water to heat 146 major office buildings in downtown St. Paul. Not a bit of energy is wasted—not even the waste. The excess heat generated as the water boils is captured and used to create steam, which generates still more electricity to power pumps and to deliver heat.

The plant is a model of energy efficiency. It is also a model of energy diversity. It uses conventional fuels like oil and natural gas and coal, and renewable fuels like wood chips. And the plant is a model of affordability. While other energy prices rise, District Energy has not raised its heating and cooling rates in 4 years.

We're beginning to see the power of the future, not only in office buildings but also in our homes and our cars. This spring the Sustainable Buildings Industry Council showcased a solar-powered home so advanced that it actually produces more energy than it uses. And some Americans are already driving hybrid cars that can convert to battery power to reduce emissions and get up to 70 miles a gallon of gas. These are our early glimpses of a future in which Americans will meet our energy needs in ways that are efficient, clean, convenient, and affordable.

The future is achievable, if we make the right choices now. But if we fail to act,